

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A handheld computing device, comprising:
2 a housing;
3 a processor supported by the housing;
4 a wireless telephony device coupled to the processor;
5 a display having a graphical user interface coupled to the
6 processor; and
7 a plurality of input keys;
8 wherein the device is programmed to effectuate a
9 predetermined communications connection when a user depresses two or
10 more input keys simultaneously.
- 1 2. The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the
2 predetermined communications connection is effectuated by dialing a
3 predetermined telephone number.
- 1 3. The handheld computing device of Claim 2, wherein the
2 predetermined number is the number for an emergency service.
- 1 4. The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the user
2 must depress and hold the two or more input keys for greater than one
3 second to effectuate the predetermined communications connection.
- 1 5. The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the user
2 must depress four input keys simultaneously to effectuate the
3 predetermined communications connection.
- 1 6. The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the
2 device effectuates the predetermined communications connection
3 regardless of whether the wireless telephony device is powered on.

1 7. The handheld computing device of Claim 1, wherein the
2 device effectuates the predetermined communications connection
3 regardless the state of the software operating on the device.

1 8. The handheld computing device of Claim 3, wherein the
2 device calls the emergency service by dialing 9-1-1.

1 9. The handheld computing device of Claim 3, wherein the
2 device calls the emergency service by dialing 1-1-2.

1 10. The handheld computing device of Claim 1, further
2 comprising:
3 a plurality of navigation buttons, wherein the device is
4 programmed to effectuate the predetermined communications connection
5 when a combination of the navigation buttons and the input keys is
6 depressed simultaneously.

1 11. A method of making an emergency request, comprising the
2 steps of:
3 providing a handheld computing device having wireless
4 communication capability and having two or more user input devices; and
5 activating two or more user input devices simultaneously,
6 whereby the device effectuates a communications channel to an
7 emergency service.

1 12. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,
2 further comprising the step of:
3 activating the two or more input devices for at least one
4 second.

1 13. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,
2 wherein the user must activate four input devices simultaneously to
3 effectuate the communications channel to the emergency service.

1 14. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,
2 wherein the device effectuates the communications channel to the
3 emergency service regardless of the state of any software operating on
4 the device.

1 15. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,
2 wherein the communications channel is a telephone connection to an
3 emergency service made by dialing 9-1-1.

1 16. The method of making an emergency request of Claim 11,
2 wherein the communications channel is a telephone connection to an
3 emergency service made by dialing 1-1-2.

1 17. The method of placing an emergency call of Claim 11,
2 further comprising the steps of:
3 providing a plurality of navigation buttons and user input
4 keys, wherein the device is programmed to effectuate the
5 communications channel when a combination of the navigation buttons
6 and the user input devices are depressed simultaneously.

1 18. A method of programming a handheld computer having a
2 hardware abstraction layer, an operating system, and wireless
3 communication capability to call an emergency service in response to user
4 input, comprising the steps of:
5 programming the hardware abstraction layer to direct the
6 operating system to dial the emergency service when a user activates a
7 certain combination of input devices simultaneously.

1 19. The method of programming a handheld computer of Claim
2 18, wherein the certain combination of input devices includes the
3 depression of four keys.

1 20. The method of programming a handheld computer of Claim
2 18, wherein the user must activate the certain combination of input
3 devices for greater than one second.

1 21. A handheld computer, comprising:
2 a processor;
3 a display including a touch screen coupled to the processor;
4 a plurality of user input keys coupled to the processor;
5 a wireless telephony device coupled to the processor; and
6 an operating system running on the processor;
7 whereby the operating system is configured to call an
8 emergency service when two or more user input keys are pressed
9 simultaneously.

1 22. The handheld computer of Claim 21, wherein the handheld
2 computer does not include a mechanical telephone keypad.

1 23. The handheld computer of Claim 21, wherein the emergency
2 service is called when four input keys are depressed simultaneously.

1 24. The handheld computer of Claim 23, wherein the input keys
2 must be depressed simultaneously for at least one second.